

[Edw. E. Jones]

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Folkstuff - Rangelore 10/25/37

Gauthier, Sheldon F.

Rangelore

Tarrant Co., Dist. #7 [62?]

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FEC

Edw. F. Jones, 78, was born in the Indian Territory, now known as Oklahoma, on March, 5, 1860. His parents moved to Trenton, Ca., in 1881. The family moved to Ft. Worth in 1870. Edward's mother was a half-blood Cherokee Indian, and a cousin of [uanah?] Parker. Edward began his cowhand career in 1875. He quit the range in 1886 to make the carpenter trade his life's vocation. He married Bertha Raylie in 1892. They reared 15 children and now reside at 300 N. Henderson St., Ft. Worth, Tex. His story:

"I was born in the Indian Territory which is now the state of Oklahoma. I can't tell the location of my birth because the country has changed so much since then, but it was in the section around Oklahoma City. My mother was a half-breed Cherokee Indian, and belonged to the [uanah?] Parker family. As well as I can reckon the breeding from what my folks told me, I am a second cousin to [uanah?] Parker.

When I was a stripling hardly a year old, my father and mother went to Brenton, Georgia. That State was by father's old home. Mother did not take to the Georgia Country, and Dad had the west in his blood, so they dragged back to the West, and came to Fort Worth in

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1870. I was ten years old then, and I thought Fort Worth was a big town but there was not much to it.

"I went to school regular but spent my spare time where I could find a hoss and some cows, and had no trouble finding what I was looking for. I became a good rider, and at the age of 15, I had a powerful hankering for excitement and work with a hoss. That meant the range, and I dragged out to the skillet Section of Texas. I was shaped up with my own rigging, saddle, hoss, six-gun and a sombrero. C.12 - 2/11/41 - Texas 2 I had accumulated the money to buy the rigging by doing work during school vocations and after school hours.

"I reckon that I could have caught on with some outfit close to home but the reports of the Indian raids and the rustler's doings coming from the Skillet section had me feeling like it was the spot for me to [light?].

I rode my Mustang out of town headed Westward and lit right where I wanted to. I was taken on there by the BO outfit. It was among the big outfits of the day. I worked for that outfit for five years, then joined up with the JA, and stayed with it for four years. From the JA, I dragged to Parker County and joined up with the Farmer outfit. After two years there, I got the idea I wanted to travel double, and the woman insisted that I anchor at some spot close to her so she could get a peep at me when she was so inclined. Because of the lay of the land, I quit the range and came to Fort Worth, and I've squatted here ever since. I took to carpentering and that has been my line of work since I quit the cows.

"When I hit the BO outfit, I thought I was a regular. Of course, I could throw a loop some and ride fairly well but I was nothing more then a scissor bill. John Petrie was the top screw at the time, and it was him I hit up for a nesting place. It was late of day and he said, 'Well, Kid, cool your saddle and put your nose in the chuck trough. After you have attended to those duties, we'll gab a spell about the matter'. It was not long 'til the belly-cheater yelled, 'Come a-running you snakes, and get it'.

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"That call had a pleasant sound because I had nothing but a Spanish meal since morning and was gaunt. The cooky gave us broiled steak, baked beans, soda sinkers, stewed prunes, and all 3 the Texas butter, sop, and black coffee we desired. After I had packed the chuck 'til my tape worm quit yelling, the top screw says to me, 'Let's adjourn to the dog house where we can chaw the rag a spell'.

"We mosied over to the bunk house and sat down while he began to get my history. After he found out I had never been shot or hung for rustling cattle, he says to me, 'Kid, you are a tender foot, I take it'.

"'No', says I, 'I worked around cattle. That is all I ever done'.

"'I reckon a man of your age, putting in all your time on a hoss, handling cattle, has a lot of cow-knowledge. We can use a hand but the pay right now is a wee bit below standard. The price of cattle is shot full of holes and the ram rod will only pay you \$10.00 a month as the matter stands right now. If that bell rings to your satisfaction, I'll put you to work in the morning, 'he says.

"'It sounds alright to me'? I shot back at him, and I was shooting straight. That \$10.00 had a pure ring to me.

"'I reckon you can stay with the oily broncos but we have a remuda with only sally-hooten critters in it, which I'll start you out with and after you get your seat warmed, I'll start you out with the snakes', he prattles to me.

"'Suit yourself', I says.

"'I am glad to hear that, kid. There is your louse nest', he says while pointing to a bunk. The gang went to chinning about great ropers, riders, and telling of the jams that they had been in and range work in general. What I heard that night, filled [?] my 4 conk with a hankering to see some of the stuff.

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"After having the chuck the following morning, the top screw dragged me to the corral and pointed out a Mustang that had the tree on it and ready to go. The screw says, 'There is the critter you'll use this morning. I had one of the boys shape it up for you. He is easy and be a little careful with him because I don't want the animal sollowed. I was rearing to go so pronto, I straddled the bronc.

"I had no more than hit the tree until that Mustang started for the moon. He was a fence rower and caught me off base. I went up so high that the Blue birds had time to build in my pocket before I had time to hit this ball of mud and when I hit, I lost the two previous chews of 'baccy I had taken. That hoss was a near full blood Spanish and owned by one of the waddies. The owner could ride him but with a stranger, that hoss sure put on the wiggles.

"The boys were all sitting on the op'ra house, getting their eyes full and busting their innards laughing at me. They were all as happy as a preacher in a saloon away from home, and when my riding ability was shown, they shaped me up with a gentled hoss that worked for me. It pitched a little to get the kinks out of it's fins.

"I nested there for five years and did everything a waddy is called on to do. I was not long getting out of the scissor bill class and before I quit the range, I was one of the top loopers and riders.

"The Skillet Section of Texas was no Sunday meeting dump 5 in the 70's. There was the rustlers and the Indian raids that we had to meet up with, and we waddies had the fighting to do as well as nurse the cows. There was always the night riding to do watching the herd. The riders would circle the herd, going in opposite directions and in that way, they could post their pals on the shape of things.

"On top of the night riding in those days, it was often necessary to have men out watching for raids by aband of Indians, brand blotters and rustlers in general. I have put in many nights with my hoss tied to my leg so it would wake me if I went to sleep, laying out with

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my guns ready, expecting [any?] moment that the need for action would come, and several times, it come. There was the ornery thief, and there was the Indian after meat that we had to watch. [On?] a cold wet night, that job was not putting silver linings in your cloud.

“One time I had to fire my six gun so fast, it got so hot I could hardly handle it. It was a full moon night with drifting clouds so it changed from bright to dark and our lamps could not keep glued to objects. That night, I spied what I reckoned was a stranger at a point where strangers had no [puddling?]. I fired two shots in the directions That was a high sign for the others, both the night riders and the watchers to show up. All the watchers come a-running to where I was, and as many of the night riders as could be spared, and scattered out around me. By the time we all got set for action, we heard a shot over on our right. We then got into our cokns what had happened and what was up. The vermin had mosied over after they saw the waddies bunching. He had out a 6 gut by our move and played into the skunk's hands, so we dragged over towards the direction of the shot.

We did not have long to wait for action. A shower of lead greeted us and for about 30 minutes, there was lots of action. The vermin would not come close enough for us to get a sure hit but would drive in, shoot, then drive back out of range. We could not follow far because of the herd. What them skunks were after was to get a chance to break through and stampede the critters.

“At first, the boys thought that it was Billy the Kid, who was then still circulating, because the gang was showing so much guts. I calculated it was Indians on the jump because they were trying to pull us away from the herd. They would drive in, first from one direction and then from the other, and wham away at us. We would then wham away at them. There must have been about 30 of them and they worried us 'til Murphy, the boss of the night crew, got plum riled and said, 'Hell, boys, let's go get them skunks. We'll take a chance on the critters', so we lit in after them, shooting as fast as we could in the general direction of the gang as Murphy had directed, and traveling lined up a-breast. I calculated we never would get them and we didn't. Hell, we saw Indians in every direction, circling, and lead

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was coming from [?] every which-away for a few minutes. The way we were shooting, the vermin thought that help had arrived because they got out of range pronto. When westoped shooting, my gun was so hot I had to lay it on the ground to cool.

We never fond out if we made any hits but they never came close to us waddies. They nicked the stub of my saddle [nd?] cut a little flesh on Murphy's hoss. The boss blamed the raid on 7 [uanah?] Parker's tribe but I learned that it was not his people. I made a call on them afterwards and Quannah told me none of his people were mixed in the deal.

"Fighting and trailing rustlers was part of the waddy's work. When they were caught alive, they were generally naturalized pronto. Sometimes, they were turned over to the law. I am not going to chew about being at any naturalizing ceremony but I will says that I was present and helped to cut down three men that were hanging from a cottonwood tree. No one ever knew who attended the naturalizing ceremony. You see, it was twisting the law code a little and men never talked about such matters, or asked any questions. We waddies that cut the vermin down that time, had a suspicion they were there, and it was not because buzzards were circling the spot.

"The cowmen used the naturalizing system because the court trials [were?] uncertain. It was hard to get a jury that did not have a rustler friend. There were men in with the rustlers on the QT. After I quit the BO outfit, John Petrie was banished from the country in 1884, on the charge of working with the rustlers while he was the top screw of the BO outfit.

"I guess you have heard about what happened West of the Pecos. The rangers corraled all the bad men, and there were not enough pure [me?] men left to fill a jury.

"I left the BO outfit and joined up with the JA outfit in 1880. It was owned by Goodnight and Adair. I nested there for four years. Goodnight had some of the best waddies that ever straddles a hoss and threw a loop, working for him. Goodnight 8 would not have a man that drank or gambled. That was one reason I hankered to join up with the outfit. I have

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never taken a drink in my life, and give my mother credit for the fact. She often told me that firewater and Indian blood would not mix.

“When I joined up with the JA outfit, there were Johny Come Lately, the camp cook, John Mann, the wagon boss, Jud Campbell was top screw on the trail, and there were Jim Owen, Jim Mitchell, Club Foot Jack, Jess Steen, and others that were the best in the business.

“The year after I joined up with the JA outfit, I was ordered out with several others to work a roundup East of us. We worked about four months and had a bunch of JA critters rounded up, and was ready to drift them back to the home range. Around [?], there were a tough bunch of buckaroos that lived on gambling and rustling, and had the rep that they would not stop for anything but would get what they started for.

“While cutting out there, the boys engaged in a little hoss racing. Bud Roberts and Mitchell cleaned a number of the tough bucks in the racing. Bud had a buckskin pony that to look at, you would think he was dead and had forgot to turn over but he was a streak of sky fire in the run.

“The boys would rib up a race and the gamblers reckoned the buckskin by his looks and bet against it. The loss of their money did not set well on their guts. The night before we were ready to drift back home with the herd, Mitchell got wind that we were in for a fight before we could leave.

“Well, sir, that next morning, we were all shaped up to 9 to start and a couple of men showed up and claimed some of the cattle in our herd. Mitchell and all of us were sure the herd was pure. Fact is, the old man would put us on the drag if we brought in an unclean herd. Them buckaroos just wanted to start a fight. We could see that lay of the land. They were getting ready to start cutting into our herd. Mitchell, in face of their move, gave us riding orders.

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"Club Foot Jack was sitting on his hoss with a muley in his hand and yelled out, 'The first skunk that starts to cut a critter will get the eternal Brand sure to hell!' You could tell at the first glance that Club Foot was a booger in a scrap. I was on my own hoss. The best hoss that ever followed a cow, and I did not give it any mind. He was doing his part in keeping that herd a-moving. All I had to do was to keep my eye on the skunks with my six gun ready. That herd drifted out with every critter in it. Then [?] decided that Club Foot was speaking for a bunch of waddies that had sand in their gizzards.

"It was a question of keeping your guard up those days. Every minute while on a drive, [nd?] be ready for trouble. I was with a drive of 1,000 head into New Mex' one time, and we got messed up with the worst stampede that ever took place, I reckon. There was a wet spell on, and we were fairly frazzled. The cattle were bedded down on a flat near a draw. Every thing was sociable and we were not expecting any trouble. About an hour before day, a party of Indians sneaked up that draw and suddenly opened fire on us. They pulled a fifth ace on us. Not being ready for them, we all had to go for our guns. We got our hands 10 on our shooting irons and began to make for our hosses while shooting. One of the boys were nicked in the neck but outside of that, noone was hurt. There were several cattle down and the rest of the herd was stampeding, the hosses included.

"The Indian custom was never to leave their dead so we did not know if we winged any of them but we saw blood. That showed we had nicked some of them. They vamoosed as quick as they came, The stampede was what they wanted and they sure got one that time. The clouds were hanging low and it was not long 'til a storm broke that produced more skyfire. than I have ever seen. It was so dark that we could not see where the cattle were. We could tell something about their direction from the clashing of horns and the stomping of hoofs, and see when the fire flashed from the sky. That night, I saw the fire jiggling off my hosses ears. I could reach down and feel of them but could not feel anything but there it was, every once in awhile.

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"We lost over 200 head by the time that stampede was over with, and there must have been nearly a 100 head that fell from exhaustion. I never seen animals travel so fast. We worked the herd for 15 hours before we got it under control. They would go from one run to another. With a stampede, the waddies must ride until the critters are stopped or drop when they run themselves out. We could not stop for chuck. [hen] the worm yelled, we just took a Spanish supper. That is, pull your belt up a notch.

"With all the tough going, I did not lose my leaf lard but stayed in good shape and could fight a bear with a switch. Of course, we had spells when we could ease up and play. On the 11 JA, where the rule was against gambling and drinking, the boys would get up matches in shooting, roping, and riding. The best shot I ever saw was on the JA. Club Foot Jack could draw and hit the mark quicker than any of the boys. I don't think there was any one that could beat him. Mitchell was fast, and I was no snail climbing a slick log at it, either.

"My trick was roping. I could swell up like a carbuncle over my roping and not be whiffy. The fastest man I ever met handling a rope was Booger Red. He was on the BO with us for a time, and while he was there, we fought it out many times. Then after I came to the Farmer outfit, down in Parker County, Booger and I contested in a rodeo that the waddies held, here in Fort Worth. It was on the grounds where the North Side High school now stands, that we gathered. There was no charge. The people just bunched around and got their eyes full. That was before the days of organized rodeos. Perhaps our contest gave the idea for the start of the organized rodeos. Well, Booger Red bested me. I looped and tied a steer, hog fashion, in 1 and 2/3 seconds, and he did the trick in 1 and 1/3 seconds.

"The boys on the BO and the JA would sometimes go to dances. I have seen them start on a 60 mile jiggle to the hoe-down. I never went to a hoe-down but I did go to the Indian doings once in awhile, and I would go to visit Quanah Parker's family. Both of the ranches

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had a couple of boys that owned fiddles and could agitate the cat gut. That would silver line our cloud considerable.

"After I quit the JA outfit, I worked for the Farmer outfit 12 for a spell and there I found it different. The boys would go to town each pay day and shoot the works. I often came in with them but laid off the drinks. While they would be drinking, I would be sally-hootin.

"I recall one time when about 10 of us were passing where the court house now stands. There were seven street lights in sight, and we shot out the seven. We were dragging for the ranch and did it for fun. The idea of hurting somebody was not in our mind. It just tickled our innards to see somebody hightail it. There was a policeman on the street at the time but with the first shot, he vamoosed. I did not care for that kind of fun but I was with the boys and I would play the game while with them. Because I did not care for that kind of fun was why I did not go to dances with them but visited with the Indians instead.

"I quit the ranch life in 1885 and took to carpentering. I have followed that work since. I got married in 1892, to Bertha Raylie, and we reared 15 children. 12 of them are still living and are here in Fort Worth.

"I was no different from the rest of the waddies about my conk cover, boots, hoss and gun. We wanted the best in that rigging. I wore a \$20.00 pair of spurs, \$15.00 hat, and a \$10.00 pair of boots.

"The best hoss I ever rode was my hoss that I rode out of Fort Worth to the Skillet. After a couple of month's work among the cattle, that hoss could work alone except to know what animal to cut out of the herd. It would work a critter out of the herd and there was no fooling. That hoss would work on the critter's tail hump and would soon have the critter in the notion of going where the hoss wanted him to go. When roping, I never had to talk to 13 to it. That hoss would watch where the rope went, and the moment the loop went over the critter, she would sit to take up the slack and hold. If I missed, it would lay back it's ears and put me in position for another loop pronto. It seemed that the hoss would get

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riled when I missed. "When we were watching for rustlers and I was using my own hoss, I could lie down and cover up with my slicker and depend on that hoss poking me with her nose if anything strange showed up and she could tell when some strange vermin was in the section long before I could see anything. While I would be lying down, she would graze around and every once in awhile, come over and smell of me. I am sure it did that to see if I was alright.

"When it comes to reckoning about critters, we don't want to forget about old Blue, the long horn steer on the JA. He was raised by Goodnight down in the Southern section of the State. Blue got away through sale, or strayed, at one time but come back to the home outfit, and there he stayed. Goodnight would not part with him at any price because he calculated Blue to be the most valuable animal, beast or human, that he had.

"Blue was one of the largest critters of his kind, and had a pair of hooks that measured over seven feet from tip to tip, and he carried his head high, as proud as a pea cock. That beast was as handy as any waddy around a herd. He was used on every drive and was proud of his job. He was the real pointer when we were drifting with the cattle, and he could lead the herd better than any waddy. That was true when the herd went on a stomp. When a stam pede took place, he was as busy as a cat in shavings. He 14 would work on the outside of the cattle and you could hear his voice talking to those critters. He maybe cussed, or was pleading. Whatever it was, he would talk to the bunch. [hile?] the boys were singing or hooting, which ever they [we e?] best at, Old Blue was throwing in with them with his voice.

"For pay, Blue received the respects of all the waddies and extra feed. He was a regular caller at the chuck wagon and the belly cheater always had some sinkers or gun wadding for him, and he sure liked the stuff but pie was his long suit. The cheater claimed that he would laugh when pie was given to him.